7th April 1953]

Visit of Hon. Minister for Public Works to Machkund.

* 365 *Q.*—Sri K. GOVINDA RAO: Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that during the course of the visit of the Hon. Minister for Public Works to Machkund in the month of January 1953 an amount spent for his meals was credited to the accounts of the Electricity department at Machkund; and

(*b*) if so, what was the amount and under what head it was accounted for?

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" (*a*) & (*b*) The Machkund Project is in an out-of-the-way agency area, where distinguished visitors cannot get suitable boarding and lodging. A lump-sum provision of Rs. 200 is made each year for expenses on this account. Officers taking hospitality draw only a fourth of the normal Daily Allowance.

The Public Works Minister and his minimum personal staff and members of the Security Police accompanying him and the District Policemen deputed to look after him, were provided with meals during the Minister's visit to the project lasting two days. The cost of meals served to 30 members of the project staff who dined at Jalaput camp along with the Minister during his visit to that camp, and the cost of transport of provisions not available in the camp site, were also debited to the lump-sum provision referred to under '81-A. Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes—I. Hydro-Electric Schemes—Post-war Reconstruction—D. Machkund Hydro-Electric Scheme.'

The total amount so debited was Rs. 130–2–0."

Sri K. GOVINDA RAO:—" Sir, in view of the fact that there is scope for misapprehension on the part of the public if such a method is adopted, will the Government take the suggestion that hereafter the expenses of Hon. Ministers should be accounted for only in the Travelling Allowance Bills to which they are entitled and not on any other account?"

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" Sir, whatever the misapprehension, it has been removed by the question which the hon. Member has kindly put. They are drawing one-fourth daily allowance when they take advantage of this provision. It is not for the Hon. Ministers that the provision is made. It is an inter-State Project, and the whole of India is interested in such a large Project. We get a number of visitors, and we have to make provision for them."

Sri C. V. K. RAO:—" Sir, can the Hon. Chief Minister tell us how many meals per day the Hon. the Minister for Public Works took during his visit to that area?"

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" I can say, Sir, that he follows the usual practice of three meals a day."